

ahead of being sworn in as California's Attorney General, I will resign from my office as the Representative of the 34th Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It has been a distinct honor to serve the people of Los Angeles and my country in Congress for more than 24 years. I am eternally grateful to my constituents for their tremendous counsel and support over those two decades.

I leave my work in Congress with mixed emotions. The People's House has been home to some of America's greatest patriots and talent. I have learned from them and been fortunate to have had a chance to add my grains of sand—as we say in Spanish—to build a better America.

In service to my country I will always look for the best way to make the biggest difference for our people. Working as Attorney General on behalf of the more than 39 million Americans in California—the sixth most vibrant economy in the world—will give me that chance to fight for all Americans to share in the forward-leaning values and opportunities that have made California so great.

I hereby submit my resignation from the House of Representatives. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues in Congress in the future for the betterment of our great nation.

Sincerely,

XAVIER BECERRA,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Re Resignation from the United States Congress.

Governor JERRY BROWN,
State Capitol,
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR BROWN: I write to inform you officially that, effective January 24, 2017, ahead of being sworn in as California's Attorney General, I will resign from my office as the Representative of the 34th Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It has been a distinct honor to serve the people of Los Angeles and my country in Congress for more than 24 years. I am eternally grateful to my constituents for their tremendous counsel and support over those two decades.

I will do my utmost to uphold your faith in me to serve as our great state's next chief law enforcement officer and legal advocate. And while I leave Congress with mixed emotions, I am ready to begin my work as Attorney General. California's hard-working families are counting on us, and we won't let them down.

Sincerely,

XAVIER BECERRA.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), the whole number of the House is 433.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MOVE PAST POLITICAL DIVISION

(Mr. BOST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is clearly divided. The division was displayed when a group of students from Marion High School in my district came to Washington for the inauguration weekend.

On the way back to their hotel on Saturday night, a group of protesters surrounded their bus, threw projectiles through the windows, and painted the bus. Imagine that. A group of history students coming 13 hours across this great Nation and wanting to participate in the peaceful transfer of power only to be intimidated.

Free speech is essential to our democracy. However, acts of violence and intimidation have no place. Now is the time for both parties to move to get past this political division that is going through this country.

TAKE AWAY ANTITRUST EXEMPTION FROM HEALTH INSURERS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I remember the bad old days of health insurance before the Affordable Care Act. They could refuse to sell you a policy if you had ever been sick. They could refuse to renew your policy if you got sick. Oh, and they had another thing called rescission, where they could put a group of examiners on you and try and take away your policy if you got sick, and this happened numerous times due to technicalities.

They can't do those things anymore.

They had a cap on your benefits. If you had a really expensive disease: Oh, sorry, your benefits are exhausted. You just go die now.

So those things are gone; but if they totally repeal the Affordable Care Act, they are likely to come roaring back.

The Republicans say competition will take care of that. The problem is there is no competition in the insurance industry. They are exempt from antitrust law. They can and they do collude to set rates, to redline people, to decide what States they will sell policies in.

Therefore, today, I am introducing the Health Insurance Fair Competition Act. It would subject the health insurance industry to the same laws that apply to every other industry in America—except for professional sports are exempt from antitrust law. This is a commonsense solution.

If they can rely on competition, we need competition. There wouldn't be any unless we take away their antitrust exemption.

REPEAL MANDATES AND TAXES OF OBAMACARE AND REFORM TAX CODE

(Mr. GIBBS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GIBBS. Madam Speaker, this Congress must keep our promises to the American people. Our first responsibility is to institute policies that will grow our economy and create jobs.

For 8 years, Americans looking for work have suffered while the regulatory state sucked nearly \$2 trillion out of our economy. We must rescind these burdensome regulations and enact a commonsense approach to regulations.

ObamaCare has failed, and it is time to repeal or replace it with a patient-driven plan that incorporates free market-based principles. We have to repeal the mandates and taxes of ObamaCare and make sure no one falls through the cracks.

Finally, we have to reform our Tax Code. It is far too long and complicated. We have to cut the tax rate from a maximum of 15 to 20 percent.

These policies will jump-start the American economy from a stagnant growth rate to more than 4 percent GNP growth rate. Only a vibrant economy can provide for a strong national security and robust infrastructure capable of supporting jobs.

OPPOSE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mr. LAWSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to voice my strong opposition to the current efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Nearly 20 million Americans have gained access to health care because of the Affordable Care Act, including nearly 1.5 million Floridians. Because of the ACA, over 278,000 children in Florida have gained healthcare coverage, and 132,000 young adults in Florida have been able to remain on their parents' health insurance plan until they reach age 26. Women in Florida and across this Nation can now purchase health insurance for the same price as men because of the ACA's ban on gender rating.

Repealing the law could endanger the health and welfare of hundreds of thousands of Floridians and their families. Repealing the ACA would not only make America sick again, but it would threaten the economic security of every American. I will not stand by and allow my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to dismantle the ACA and threaten the health and economic security of millions of hardworking Americans.

REMEMBERING A PILLAR OF ST. CLOUD, DICK BERNICK

(Mr. EMMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER. Madam Speaker, this past week our community lost a dedicated leader and a friend. Dick Bernick, the patriarch of the third generation to run family-owned Bernick's Companies, passed away after an incredible life.

Bernick's Companies is a Minnesota success story. This past year, Bernick's and the Bernick family reached an amazing milestone with the 100th anniversary celebration of the business. Dick played a huge role in that success by guiding and growing the family business through good and financially difficult times.

Dick Bernick's life was an American success not just because of his business, but because his life was filled with family, friends, and service to the community he so loved. Dick gave so much to the St. Cloud community. In fact, his company continues to donate a percentage of its profits back to different charities and organizations in the communities that Bernick serves.

We send our sincere condolences to Dick's wife, Lila; his children; and the rest of his family. We hope that you will find comfort in the fact that Dick's life and his legacy of generosity have left an indelible mark on the community that he loved, and that he will always be remembered.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FAILURE TO DIVEST OWNERSHIP INTERESTS

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, it doesn't take a law degree. It doesn't take imagination. All it takes is common sense to see that President Trump's ownership and his family's operation of hotels and golf courses and rental properties is ripe for corruption.

President Trump's failure to completely divest his ownership interest not only violates tradition followed by every other modern President, it is unconstitutional. The Constitution prohibits any U.S. official—including President Trump—from taking payments from foreign governments.

His ongoing involvement in The Trump Organization will let foreign governments funnel payments to his businesses. Foreign operatives will try to curry favor with the administration with no accountability to the American people.

When he took the oath of office last week, President Trump swore to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. Sadly, his refusal to cut his business ties has broken that vow in these very first days of his administration.

HONORING RUTH SAMUELSON

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Ruth Samuelson, a long-time leader in the North Carolina House of Representatives and a former member of the Mecklenburg County Commission. Ruth is now in Heaven following a courageous battle with ovarian cancer.

Ruth infused her faith in God in all aspects of her family, political, personal, and civic life. Because of her vibrant faith and commitment to focusing on what truly matters, Ruth was known as a thoughtful mediator throughout her tenure in the North Carolina House, someone who approached tense, partisan issues with grace, yet never backed away from her convictions.

In 2013, Ruth was in line for a top leadership role, but instead, she walked away, choosing instead to focus on her passions for family, faith, and philanthropy. Ruth's last public statement was: "I want people to know that God is my good friend."

May the Lord bring comfort to her husband, Ken; to her children, Bobby, David, Joy, and Alex; her four grandchildren; and the countless lives that she touched.

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT HEALTH

(Mr. ESPAILLAT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of every woman's right to make her own informed decisions about her health, including access to family planning and reproductive health care.

While the rest of the world moves forward, we are turning the tide clock back to the era of "Mad Men." However, unlike President Trump and my Republican colleagues, I have heard the voices of hundreds of thousands of people I marched with last Saturday.

I accept the overwhelming research opposing the outrageous policies that President Trump and the Republicans in Congress have placed at the center of their agenda, policies like the global gag rule and H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. These dangerous and irresponsible policies are a disgraceful attack on women's rights domestically and throughout the world.

Let's get this straight, Madam Speaker. What this is about is keeping low-income women from accessing the health care they so rightfully deserve.

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SUPPORT FOR H.R. 7

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Madam Speaker, barring the use of certain Federal funding for abortion is not a new concept. The Hyde amendment has, more or less, called for this ban for 40 years, but the Hyde amendment is not permanent and must be reintroduced every year for it to go into effect. As such, it has been reformed from time to time, and, sooner or later, I believe it will cease to be implemented; so it is time to make the Hyde amendment permanent law. It is long overdue.

Madam Speaker, this bill we are debating is not about man versus woman; it is not about liberal versus conservative; H.R. 7 is not about taking away the rights of a woman. It is about protecting the rights of the unborn because, at the end of the day, this is what this comes down to. Who knew something so obviously and so morally right would be so controversial?

I ask my colleagues to support this bill as we protect the lives of those who cannot speak for themselves.

In God we trust.

H.R. 7 AND GAG RULE

(Mr. LARSEN of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the latest attack on women's reproductive rights.

Today's bill comes on the coattails of the new administration's yesterday reinstating the global gag rule, which limits women's reproductive health care outside the U.S.—and all of this after 3.2 million women and men across the country participated in the women's march last Saturday. The march sent a clear message that this administration should not undermine women's rights and women's health care.

And this is the response—to undermine women's reproductive health care?

Madam Speaker, the people of our country are watching; they are showing up; they are paying attention; and they will not back down in the face of attempts to move this country backwards.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 7.

SITES RESERVOIR IS OVERDUE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, while it might be raining lately in California, we still need additional water supply infrastructure to meet the needs of agriculture and a growing population. The Sites Reservoir is the only project in California that will improve the water supply for cities, farms, as well as for the environment.